

2/26/70

Dear Mary.

This has been a week of semi-futilities, futilities and non-work necessities, with automotive breakdowns the direct consequence of "maintenance", being towed twice, bled six times, having all the gums around my teeth punched and probed today, with a certain amount of scraping, and of four calls to the Archives to get files set out for me when there was no answer (as I didn't go there today, having learned that if the files are not in the search room by the time I get there the wasted time makes it too wasteful). So, I respond to your letter of the 18 from recollection of it this early a.m., when I picked the mail up at the p.o. on the way to Washington.

The letter to Tom is fine. I hope he does what you ask. I suggest if you see anything you regard as confidential, you give it no further distribution, but that you let Paul/Jim and Gary also go over this, because they also have specialized in some aspects. You say Tom and Hall are poor investigators. From the record I agree. However, in each case, I think there is a different cause. And there is another difference. In this case, Tom is plain incompetent. In other cases, I'd imagine he is rather competent, especially in music. He just didn't understand what he saw when he saw it, often when it was obvious.... But I also believe he did what he did from what to him is principle. On the other hand, there came a time when I am certain he found what he was doing unacceptably. At that time he failed to follow the course of honor and integrity, to separate himself... One of the reasons I did not get to meet Larry earlier, in fact, the only reason, was deference to his wishes. I was asked to, but for the wrong reason. He asked me to speak to Tom first, and Tom got up tight about it, so I didn't, there being so many other things undone there. However, I think I'll wait until I am again in N.C., to look him up in person, unless I come to a priority point before then. This is not the best area of concentration for me.

It is true Tom was paid to do this work, and he should have turned it in. However, it should also have been asked of him. When I learned it hadn't been and knowing a rupture was inevitable, I urged it, to no avail. He is not alone at fault.

Your fight with Borley makes me laugh, as does your lady-like assumption of fault. However, aggression is not only with physical force...

If you have any suggestions after reading COUP (both), then after you read both PMs, I'd welcome them. There is no immediate (or any) prospect of printing, but I try and free my mind after "finishing" part of this work, so with COUP, I'd appreciate this as soon as possible, if you have any. I've done the appendix and a new final chapter not directly relating to the assassinations, and I want to forget it and return to the finishing of PM. I'll probably shift the sequence of 2-3 and make the new 3 shorter than I'd planned.

Our minds have been on similar things lately, as the enclosures reflect. I finished Penn's III this very early a.m. and regret whatever it is that drove him to it. It is simply fitful.

Hope I haven't forgotten or ignored anything. Best regards,

4406 Holland  
Dallas, Texas 75219  
February 18, 1970

Dear Harold:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I wrote to Tom Bethell yesterday. I hardly see how he can refuse me. Tom stayed with us most of the period from November til mid-January, 1967, and again in June 1967... he made many visits back to Dallas and stayed with us. Then when he and Garrison parted company, and he was without a salary, we helped him. I have done a great deal of free typing for Tom, furnishing postage both ways and all the paper plus carbon copies, etc. Please believe me when I say that I was just glad that we could help him. I am not trying to say that he owes me for any of it but that I have never requested anything of him before...

Please note that I used "we" are looking for certain things. This should make it perfectly clear that I am not the only one interested in the material. I just feel that he will feel obligated to send it without questioning me about who wants it. Harold, I hope this deviousness on my part does not frighten you of me. I can swear to you that were the circumstances not what they are--as you said it--he was paid to do the work and if he had put his notes where they should have been put, we would have had access to them--at least some of us would have. Jim was always very kind to give me anything I ever asked for, plus many things I never asked him for. And, of course, I know you would have had copies...

In many ways, Tom is a very dear person to me and my family. We have tried to believe that he was sincere in his motives. Sue and Arch are very bitter toward him and believe only the worst of him, and they may very well be right. Although they are not too fond of Jim, they feel that what Tom did was a terrible thing. I know it was a terrible thing and having worked for lawyers for most of the past 30 years, I realize the seriousness of it from a legal standpoint, but I have tried to believe the best of someone I truly liked. Just as I felt about Boxley--they were both terrible investigators--but I like them both. (Bill Boxley and I actually got into a physical fight one night and my husband had to separate us--we always disagreed violently.) Other than on the subject of the "assassination", Bill and I were great friends--and still are. (I just glanced at this paragraph... let me hasten to explain that I was the aggressor in the fight. We were arguing and he made me so angry that I hit him.)

Now, on to a few things other than my letter to Tom...

Yes, it has occurred to me that Mr. Hunt could have had the "bugging" done. The fact that one employee and three former employees were bugged... the one may have been a red herring...

However, if a current employee was actually bugged, it would be very important to know which current employee. If I remember correctly, it just said "an executive" with Hunt Oil... You see, this could be Mr. Hunt himself. I have done a great deal of "questioning" about this but have so far been completely unsuccessful...

Yes, Judy Bonner's book is due out any day. I go every day to the bookstore to see if it is out. I have ordered twelve copies. I shall send you one the minute it is out. It is supposed to be titled Investigation of a Homicide.

I am terribly sorry that I did not send you a copy of the particular letter to Paul Hoch when I told him that indeed I did want copies of Post Mortem I and III. He should be sending them any day now. Trust me! I shall keep them hidden!

Harold, if you would like to write to Larry Borenstein, please feel free to use my name. Larry is a dear, dear friend of many, many years. Larry owes me nothing! I'll never repay Larry all that I owe him. However, I do believe that Larry would do just about anything for me and if you would like to write him and ask him questions, please tell him I told you to. One of my treasures is a letter from Larry which was in answer to one of mine complaining about a rather "cool" letter he had written to me making a very small request. He wrote me a precious letter saying that, unlike lovers--who have to constantly reassure themselves by saying "I love you"--dear friends should be able to take the love for granted... It is a long and treasured letter... His address is:

E. Lorenz Borenstein  
511 Royal Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

My "boss" just returned... must go...

Love,



4406 Holland  
Dallas, Texas 75219  
February 17, 1970

Dear Tom:

I have a big, big request to make of you. I am remembering the "black book" you wrote in for so long. You brought it to my home in November of 1966 and the last time I saw you, you were still using it. (The writing was so small you will probably be able to use it as a daily journal by 1980.)

Tom, I wish you would either loan me the book for a few days or Xerox certain pages for me. I will send you the money for the Xeroxing and postage, or for the postage to send it to me and I will return it in just a few days... any way you will handle it. If there are certain pages you do not want me to copy and you do send the book, just tell me which dates or pages you do not want to "share" with me and I cross my heart, etc., that I will not copy those. But, I am interested in all you will let me have from the date we put you on the plane for Washington, January 10, 1967, I am almost certain, until the day we met you at the plane when you returned from D. C., June 10th.

I am reasonably certain that you never made "notes" in anything except that black journal, but if you did use other scraps of paper or other books, will you be kind enough to let me copy those? We are looking for references to particular things but it would be too much to ask you to search through your notes to find these items... hence, the above request.

How is your book coming along? Did you enjoy your visit with your parents? Please write and bring me up-to-date on your activities. Did the death of George Lewis hamper your efforts on the book? I think I told you last fall that I have several books on New Orleans jazz and you are welcome to borrow those. Of course, you probably have all of them. Lomax's book on Jelly Roll Morton is really a classic.

Come to visit us whenever you can. We'd love to see you any time...

Sincerely,

P. S. Please consider my request for your "black book" very carefully before you refuse me. You just might need a favor from me sometime...

bcc: Harold